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SUBJECT: BUSH, CIA, AND THOMAS JEFFERSON "ENEMIES OF VENEZUELA"

SUMMARY

1. With the referendum just a couple of days away, on August 12, President Chavez held a marathon (four-hour-long) press conference for foreign and international press. Chavez took every opportunity to criticize the U.S., its plots against him/Venezuela, and, more importantly, to tell his audience that the true battle was between the Bush administration and the Venezuelan people. The pro-Chavez printed and electoral media picked up the accusations on the front page, the latter opening with various articles, among them one entitled "Bush Will Be Defeated: a sovereign country or a colony, that is the question." The opposition press also included articles on the accusations but several preferred to highlight Chavez' promise to turn over the government if the referendum won. End Summary

CHAVEZ QUESTIONS SECRETARY POWELL'S AUTHORITY TO SET CONDITIONS

2. The first question by Jose Carlos Villanueva, "El Mundo de Espaa," asked for official collaboration of allegations contained in an article on CIA plots against Chavez.

3. President Chavez' response is extremely lengthy, excerpts follow: "... We have received some recent declarations from Washington with attention and interest; at least it looks like they are reasoning with a certain level of intelligence, a recognition of a reality, even as they continue to throw out some ideas of trampling the sovereignty of Venezuela; or they really want to trample it [referring to an alleged State document which alludes to softening of U.S. policy toward Chavez]. It's one thing to want to trample and another thing for a sovereign country to allow itself to be trampled. At this moment, so that I might respond to your question, it would not surprise me at all and we are always alert on this front, but at this time I have no proof, that is outstanding proof, to prove this, so that my government could affirm it, so that we and I can affirm it, that the CIA is making plans. In fact you published the fact that they were in Chile [referring to media stories of the CIA director in Chile "allegedly" making plans against Chavez]. I read the remarks of a Chilean official denying everything. I believe. I am sure that the Government of Chile would not allow itself to be used as a launching pad to attack Venezuela. I am sure."

4. "Nonetheless, it would surprise me and I repeat we are always on the alert to the activities of the CIA in Venezuela. They have many ways. The government of the United States independently from the CIA as a body, as an interventionist and imperialist arm has been intervening in Venezuela and we have denounced it, each time we have had proof of the gross intervention of Mr. Bush in Venezuela. The financing, for example of coup groups, the financing of what they call groups that are working for democracy, it is not that they are working for democracy but they are working toward destabilization, they have been working toward disavowing our constitution."

5. "The Bush administration, and we have proof, documents, has been financing and spending millions of dollars to finance the Venezuelan opposition, in fact for this referendum, for the collection of signatures, to try to set up parallel bodies to the institutions of the State. He has supported the Venezuelan opposition in many ways. That is to say, the Bush administration will be defeat this Sunday. I believe that they are trying to wash their hands so that they do not have to shoulder that defeat. I have always said that the Venezuelan people's real confrontation in Venezuela it is not with the opposition. This opposition has a

master who is called Mister George W. Bush. It is from there that the opposition is controlled. This Sunday in truth [the question] is not, will Chavez go or will Chavez stay? What is really being played is whether Venezuela will continue as a Sovereign State with a national plan, a plan of comprehensive development or will Venezuela again turn into a colony receiving orders from Washington. This is what is being debated in Venezuela. The government of the United States, as they say, and their own words have confirmed it; high officials of the Bush administration have recently acknowledged, that here in Latin America, that yes they

have been financing the opposition. Brazenly they have acknowledged it, they violated our laws and the gross meddling is permanent."

16. "Just yesterday, Mr. Powell was saying that they [the U.S.] would recognize the results of the referendum. Who is this Mr. Powell so that he can lay conditions for the recognition of the results of the referendum? Venezuela has its institutions, has its people, we do not need any conditions and, we not only don't need them, we absolutely reject and categorically reject them. The conditions are set by our Constitution, in our laws and criteria, the rules, which have dictated the electoral arbiter, the Venezuelan institutionalism, the National Electoral Council." The response continued.

EXPECTATIONS OF U.S. - NONE FOR THIS NUMBER ONE ENEMY
OF THE WORLD

17. President Chavez took every opportunity to criticize the U.S. (Bush/CIA/military) and highlight the "fact" that the Bush administration "is controlling and bankrolling the opposition." At one point he also said, "We do not expect much from Washington, and it doesn't really matter just to us, but rather the whole world, because that government (U.S.) has become the number one enemy of the world, number one."

THOMAS JEFFERSON ALSO THE "DEVIL"?

18. Looking at the historical perspective, Chavez found roots for the Latin American/Venezuelan clash with the U.S. and for U.S. imperialism. He argues that Bolivar did not want to invite the U.S. to the 1829 congress in Panama because he "prophesized that 'The U.S. seems destined by fate to plague the Americas with misery in the name of liberty.'" Chavez argued, "He was justified because Monroe was calling for an America for the Americans and Thomas Jefferson was saying that the U.S. should progressively absorb all the emerging nations, absorbing them, swallowing them. . . so this liberator of the U.S. began to see us as colonies . . . he wanted to create an alliance and when this did not work, they created the Monroe doctrine."

COMMENT

19. President Chavez' accusations are not new, nearly every Sunday Alo Presidente program for the last six months criticized the Bush administration, the CIA, and the U.S. ambassador to Caracas. This was Chavez' last opportunity to depict the referendum as a struggle between the Venezuelan people and the Bush administration, in order to cash in on the nationalism of the Venezuelan audience, much more than the 134 accredited foreign press.
Shapiro

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